(d) Other minor Produce.

Realisations from the sale of farms.

123. The proceeds realised by the disposal of farms for the collection and removal of minor forest produce and the right to fish in forest waters are given below for two years :—

Division.	Babul Pods.		Lac.		Munj and Sur grass, &c.		Fishery.	
	1895-96.	1896-97.	1895-96.	1896-97.	1895-96.	1896-97.	1895-96.	1896-97.
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
Sukkur ...	492	583	...	...	976	917	1,537	1,959
Naushahro ...	998	782	...	...	698	870	1,741	1,112
Hyderabad ...	7,953	12,587	7,350	5,410	301	349	1,057	1,045
Jerruck ...	3,245	2,841	367	133	...	...	314	203
Total ...	12,688	16,793	7,717	5,543	1,975	2,136	4,649	4,319

124. A variety of causes was at work affecting adversely or otherwise the sale-proceeds of the minor products as well as their recovery. Under "babul pods," the net increase amounts to Rs. 4,105, which occurs mostly in the Hyderabad Division, in which the sale price of the year was almost the same as that of the one previous ; but an outstanding sum of over three thousand rupees on account of the latter year was recovered and credited in the former. In the Hyderabad Division, the "lac" farm fetched much better prices, but an instalment of Rs. 2,730 had unavoidably to stand over unadjusted, owing to the occurrence of plague, which interfered not a little with its collection and disposal; while in the Jerruck Division, the crop of "lac" having failed, a ridiculously low offer was received, which it was not deemed worth while to accept. The sum of Rs. 133 shown in the year 1896-97 is the amount of the third instalment due on account of the preceding year. The slight increase under "Munj and Sur grass, etc.," needs no remarks, as receipts from them often vary with the demand that exists for them in the localities in which they are produced. Under "fishery," the Sukkur Division shows an increase of Rs. 422, due to the better prices obtained, while the revenue has declined in other divisions, especially in Naushahro, where the falling off was caused by the absence of the keen competition which characterised the sale of the year before.

(e) Cultivation.

Area under cereal cultivation.

125. A statement showing the area given out for cereal cultivation within forest limits and the assessment realised therefrom in two years is given below :—

Division.	Area under cultivation.				Amount realised by assessment.			
	Kharif.		Rabi.		Kharif.		Rabi.	
	1895-96.	1896-97.	1895-96.	1896-97.	1895-96.	1896-97.	1895-96.	1896-97.
	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
Sukkur ...	641	1,358	945	462	1,235	3,945	3,688	2,316
Naushahro ...	229	435	890	973	707	1,258	2,280	1,654
Hyderabad ...	23	20	47	78	86	66	202	236
Jerruck ...	40	602	45	26	229	2,004	71	75
Total ...	933	2,415	1,927	1,539	2,257	7,273	6,241	4,281

126. A larger area under "kharif" is the necessary consequence of the more rapid advancement which is being made towards reclothing the denuded tracts and replacing the rank and stunted growth by more valuable species of trees. In the Kot Sultan Forest alone, 1,153 acres were given out, against 322, in the year before. Under the arrangement in force, 627 acres, a little more than half the area, have been planted with babul and fenced in at the cultivators' expense. Subject to certain modifications to suit the particular localities, etc., a similar system is in operation in other forests, also. The area under "rabi" cultivation has fallen from 4,793 acres in the year 1894-95 to 1,539 in 1896-97, for the reasons that the lands so cultivated in previous years are being taken up by the Department for cultural operations directly they become fit to bear a tree crop, and that fresh grants are confined to depressions and low-lying tracts wherein the water level is still so high in the inundation season as to preclude all possibility of systematic treatment.

127. To calculate the rate per acre from the figures shown in the above statement is by no means a safe course to arrive at the exact rate of assessment charged by the Forest Department, inasmuch as they only exhibit the actual sums realised during the year, while under the terms of agreement executed by cultivators some of the later instalments due on the land let to cultivation in one year do not become payable till the next, and at times some of the revenue remains unadjusted when a year terminates. At the close of the year under report, such sums aggregated Rs. 1,187-7-2. In the year 1895-96. an item of Rs. 424, levied as assessment on "kharif" lands, had not been accounted for by the Divisional Forest Officer, Sukkur, and that year's figure has consequently been altered from Rs. 811 to Rs. 1,235.

III.—Free grants of Forest produce.

Free grants.

128. The usual table showing the money value of the free grants of timber and other forest produce made to agriculturists, cattle-owners living within forest limits, as well as the people of villages in the vicinity of Forest Reserves is given below for two years :—

Division.	1895-96.	1896-97.
	Rs.	Rs.
Sukkur ...	689	1,019
Naushahro ...	287	231
Hyderabad ...	403	197
Jerruck ...	32	85
Total ...	1,411	1,532

129. The figures in the above statement often vary with the vagaries of the river and the number of fires that break out in a year in villages. The larger the number of huts or houses washed away or burnt, the greater is the demand for forest material. It is satisfactory to note that the orders on the subject of free grants, quoted under paragraph 126 of last year's report, were well attended to, and necessary precautions were taken to prevent unnecessary delay to grantees in the cutting and removal of the material sanctioned in their favour.

130. There is yet another advantage which the coupe contract system of working has been the means of affording to Forest population, inasmuch as the coupe agreement provides that the contractor has no claim to the small materials consisting of branches, tooth brushes, shoots or wood of any sort five inches or less in girth at the thickest part, and that he is not to interfere with the villagers who may be permitted by a Forest Officer at any time after the commencement of felling to cut and remove the said small materials for firewood or fencing from the coupes. The area under exploitation being more or less evenly distributed, such material is available in sufficiently large quantities to meet the daily requirements of the people, and is allowed to be removed free of charge without requiring any preliminary formalities to be observed.

IV.—Produce removed by right-holders and under privileges.

Free grazing.

131. The following statement compares the number of cattle which grazed free in the forests of this Circle as well as the value of grazing enjoyed by them:—

Division.	Number of Cattle.		Value of grazing.	
	1895-96.	1896-97.	1895-96.	1896-97.
			Rs.	Rs.
Sukkur ...	18,268	16,264	25,360	21,327
Naushahro ...	8,266	8,329	3,276	3,850
Hyderabad ...	72	58	19	88
Jerruck ...	1,168	1,536	832	2,367
Total ...	27,774	26,187	29,487	27,632